



IOWA OFFICE of the **STATE MEDICAL EXAMINER**

The Mission of the Iowa State Medical Examiner

*To establish credibility in death investigation in
a system that will operate efficiently and serve
the needs of the citizens of Iowa.*



HISTORY

In the late 1950s, several individuals got together and decided deaths would be better investigated if the persons determining the need for an autopsy and completing death certificates were local physicians. This idea prompted legislative action to replace coroners with county medical examiners in 1961. The original proposed bill (House File 260) also created the position of State Medical Examiner. However, the bill was amended before leaving the legislature returning all power back to the counties, and no State Medical Examiner position was created, essentially, creating a county medical examiner system.

The law passed by the legislature in 1959 required each County Board of Supervisors to appoint a county medical examiner whose term would begin January 2, 1961. The appointed person had to be a physician who was responsible for investigating deaths that occurred in their county, and the death had to fall under medical examiner's jurisdiction. The county medical examiner determined if an autopsy was necessary, and if not, certified the death by gathering information from the scene and medical history. The 1959 legislation established examination certificate fees on a county level: \$15.00 per certificate plus expenses. Until the late 1980s, when an autopsy was needed, the county medical examiner arranged for a local pathologist or the University of Iowa to perform the autopsy.

In 1970, the Iowa legislature repealed the 1959 law and passed Senate File 585, establishing a State Criminalistics Laboratory and creating the position of State Medical Examiner. As stated at the time in Iowa Code Chapter 1280:

“SEC. 5. ...The state medical examiner shall be a physician and surgeon or osteopathic physician and surgeon and be licensed to practice medicine in the state of Iowa, and possess special knowledge in forensic pathology. The state medical examiner shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the governor. The state medical examiner may be a faculty member of the college of medicine or the college of law at the university of Iowa, and any of his assistants or staff may be members of the faculty or staff of the college of medicine or the college of law at the university of Iowa.

SEC 6. The duties of the state medical examiner shall be:

1. To provide assistance, consultation, and training to county medical examiners and law-enforcement officials.
2. To keep complete records of all relevant information concerning deaths or crimes requiring investigation by the state medical examiner.
3. To promulgate rules and regulations pursuant to chapter seventeen A (17A) of the Code regarding the manner and techniques to be employed while conducting autopsies; the nature, character, and extent of investigations to be made in cases of homicide or suspected homicide necessary to allow a medical examiner to render a full and complete analysis and report; the format and matters to be contained in all reports rendered by medical examiners; and all other things necessary to carry out this Act. All county medical examiners and peace officers shall be subject to such rules and regulations.”

The position of State Medical Examiner remained vacant, however, until 1983 when Thomas L. Bennett, M.D., began his term as the State Medical Examiner. Except for an approximately 1 1/2 year period in 1985-1986, Dr. Bennett remained in this position until 1997,. Autopsies were performed at Broadlawns Medical Center in Des Moines, Iowa, and at other locations throughout the state. Until the mid 1990s, there was no provision for a salary for the State Medical Examiner, Dr. Bennett received payment on a fee-for-service basis from the counties. On July 1, 1996, the State Medical Examiner became a full-time salaried employee of the Department of Public Safety, and at that point, the State Medical Examiner needed to be a forensic pathologist and became directly responsible for forensic autopsies.



Thomas L. Bennett, M.D.



Broadlawns Medical Center

When the office of State Medical Examiner was established, it was administered under the Iowa Department of Public Safety. Despite repeated requests for funding, staffing, and a better facility, little changed until controversy occurred in the State Medical Examiner's office in 1997. At this time, a serious effort was made to look at the needs of the state office. The National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) was asked by Paul Wieck, Iowa Public Safety Commissioner at that time, to perform a consultative evaluation of Iowa's medical examiner's office.

The NAME conducted a review of the State Medical Examiner's Office in 1998. Their recommendations included:

- Moving the office from the Department of Public Safety so it would stand alone, or to another department.
- Change the existing law to give subpoena power to the State Medical Examiner.
- Increase the budget.
- Noted the need for a facility.

The report produced by NAME is an important document and a milestone in the development of the Iowa Office of the State Medical Examiner (IOSME). NAME cited in their report that having the IOSME administrated under the Department of Public Safety, an arm of law enforcement, gave an appearance of bias toward the prosecution. To address this concern, Governor Thomas J. Vilsack signed a bill on May 27, 1999, moving the office from the Department of Public Safety to the Department of Public Health, and creating the State Medical Examiner Advisory Council and the Interagency Councils.

When Julia C. Goodin, M.D., was hired as the Chief State Medical Examiner in December 1999, there was only one other employee, an office worker. The office had no supplies, no instruments, and only rented morgue space. Over the last twelve years, the office has grown to a staff of 12 full-time employees and 31 part-time employees, including 4 full-time forensic pathologists. The office performs approximately 750 autopsies per year and reviews the reports from all cases that occur throughout the state. Not all autopsies within the county medical examiner jurisdiction, however, are performed by the state office. Some autopsies are still performed by local pathology groups and the pathologists at the University of Iowa. Dr. Gregory Schmunk, the Polk County Medical Examiner, also provides autopsies for Polk County.



Julia C. Goodin, M.D.

The State Medical Examiner was given subpoena power by Senate File 2302 during the 2000 Legislative Session. The same Senate File gave the State Medical Examiner additional power to adopt rules relating to the duties, responsibility, and operations of the state office and the county medical examiners.

Dennis F. Klein, M.D., was brought on as Deputy Chief State Medical Examiner on August 1, 2000.

In 2008, the Iowa Office of the State Medical Examiner achieved accreditation by the National Association of Medical Examiners.

In 2001, funding of \$51 million was appropriated to build a new facility to house four separate laboratories, including the State Medical Examiner's Office. The original estimated cost was \$62 million. The firm of Henningson, Durham and Richardson (HDR) was contracted to perform the architectural engineering and design work of the entire complex, including the 24,000 square feet, \$11 million medical examiner's section.



House File 2453, passed by the 2002 Legislature on March 18, 2002 and signed by Governor Vilsack on April 9, 2002, made autopsy reports confidential. An amendment was made to Iowa Code Chapter 22.7(41) requiring release of only cause of death and manner of death to the public, and only if

doing so will not hinder an ongoing investigation. Administrative rules were written to determine which cases needed to be autopsied, and to establish responsibilities and qualifications for county medical examiner investigators.

The Iowa Office of the State Medical Examiner (IOSME) serves a population of 3,062,309 (2011 census). There are 99 counties in Iowa, and currently there are 105 appointed county medical examiners, with some larger counties sharing duties between two or more county medical examiners. Assisting them are 218 deputy county medical examiners and 243 county medical examiner investigators.

All county medical examiners and deputy medical examiners are physicians. County medical examiners (CME) are appointed for a two-year term by their respective county's Board of Supervisors per Iowa Code 331.321. The appointed CME may appoint deputy medical examiners and county medical examiner investigators, who must be approved by the IOSME.



Dennis Klein, M.D.

Julia Goodin, M.D.

Michele Catellier, M.D.

Jonathan Thompson, M.D.

FIRST STATE MEDICAL EXAMINER



Thomas L. Bennett, M.D.

Dr. Thomas Bennett served as State Medical Examiner of Iowa from 1983 to 1997, with a short break in service between 1985 to 1986, when he served as Mississippi's State Medical Examiner.

Dr. Bennett received his B.A. in Biology from Drake University. Following medical school at the University of Iowa College of Medicine in Iowa City, Dr. Bennett completed his residency in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology at the Institute of Pathology, University Hospitals of Cleveland. After completing his fellowship in Forensic Pathology at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Chapel Hill, NC he completed additional residency training in Clinical Pathology at Royal C. Johnson Veterans Administration Hospital in Sioux Falls, SD.

Dr. Bennett is certified by the American Board of Pathology, is licensed in the States of Montana, Wyoming and Iowa, and is currently affiliated with Pathology Consultants, P.C. in Billings, Montana. He is a member of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS), the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME), the American Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC), the College of American Pathologists (CAP), the Montana Medical Association (MMA), and the American Medical Association (AMA).

During his time as State Medical Examiner, Dr. Bennett authored the original Iowa County Medical Examiners Handbook, which with revisions and updates is still in use today providing consistency in death investigation throughout the state.

Dr. Bennett led the forensic team that autopsied the 111 victims of the United Airlines DC-10 crash at Sioux City Airport in July 1989.

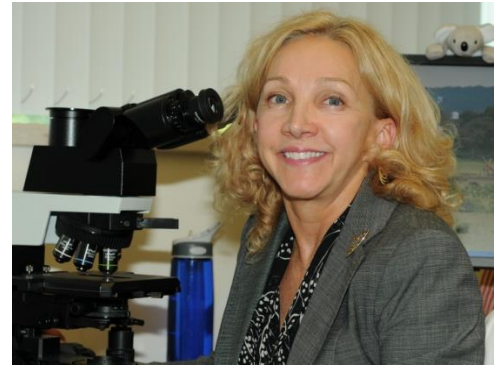
United 232 Air Disaster

On July 19, 1989, Iowa experienced its worst air disaster with the crash of United Airlines flight 232. On board were 285 passengers and 11 crewmembers; 110 passengers and 1 flight attendant died in the crash. Investigation of the accident revealed that a cracked fan disc in the tail-mounted engine of the DC-10 aircraft fragmented, causing damage to the hydraulic mechanisms that resulted in complete loss of control of all the flight control surfaces. Captain Alan Haynes, with the assistance of his crew and a flight instructor who happened to be riding as a passenger, improvised a method to control the plane by varying the thrust to the two wing mounted engines. The crew aligned the aircraft for landing and nearly made the approach when the right wing suddenly dipped causing the plane to skid, and the cabin to break up, invert and catch on fire. To this day aviation experts are unable to repeat in simulators what the United 232 crew was able to accomplish for 40 minutes in the air before the crash. Dr. Thomas Bennett, State Medical Examiner, and Dr. Dennis Mallory, Tama County Medical Examiner, along with assistance from the Division of Criminal investigation and the Iowa National Guard responded to the mass disaster, ensuring victims of the accident were properly identified. Dr. Bennett also determined that approximately half of the deaths were caused by smoke inhalation and half were due to blunt force injuries. Survivors of the accident credit their survival to the skills of the flight crew and to the Sioux Gateway Airport and surrounding communities, which had in place and practiced emergency plans.

CURRENT STATE MEDICAL EXAMINERS

Dr. Julia Goodin began her duties as Iowa Chief State Medical Examiner on December 13, 1999. She is Associate Professor of Pathology with the University of Iowa and Adjunct Associate Professor with Des Moines University.

Dr. Goodin received her B.S. in Biology and Chemistry from Western Kentucky University and an M.D. from the University of Kentucky in Lexington. She trained in both anatomic and clinical pathology at Vanderbilt University Medical Center followed by a one-year fellowship in forensic pathology at the Office of the Medical Examiner for the state of Maryland (Baltimore).



Julia C. Goodin, M.D.

She was Assistant Medical Examiner, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Baltimore, Maryland; Assistant Medical Examiner and later Acting Chief Medical Examiner, Office of Chief Medical Examiner in Nashville, Tennessee; Associate Medical Investigator, State of New Mexico, Health Sciences Center; and a State Medical Examiner, Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences, Mobile Regional Lab, Mobile, Alabama.

Dr. Goodin is board certified by the American Board of Pathology in Anatomic, Clinical and Forensic Pathology. Dr. Goodin is an active member of the National Association of Medical Examiners and the American Academy of Forensic Sciences. She served six years on the Board of Directors for each. She is also a member of the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States and the Iowa Medical Society, and served on their board of directors for three years. She is a Captain in the Navy Reserve. She has a special interest in Cardiovascular Pathology and Sports Related Sudden Deaths.



Dennis F. Klein, M.D.

Dr. Dennis Klein began his duties as Iowa Deputy State Medical Examiner on August 1, 2000. He is Adjunct Clinical Assistant Professor with the University of Iowa School of Medicine and Adjunct Associate Professor of Forensic Pathology with Des Moines University in Des Moines.

Dr. Klein completed his fellowship in forensic pathology at the Office of the Medical Investigator in New Mexico on July 31, 2000. He received his B.S. in Chemistry, cum laude, from Bowdoin College in Maine and his M.D. from the University of Vermont College of Medicine. Dr. Klein completed a one-year internship in Internal Medicine and a four-year residency training program at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. He completed a one-year fellowship in forensic pathology at the Office of the Medical Investigator, State of New Mexico. Dr. Klein is certified by the American Board of Pathology in Forensic Pathology, and Anatomic and Clinical Pathology.

Dr. Klein is a member of the IOSME Interagency Council. He was involved in developing and implementing specialized training for Iowa county medical examiners and county medical examiner investigators. He is the Program Director for the Iowa Association of County Medical Examiners Fall Meeting.

Dr. Michele Catellier began her duties as Associate State Medical Examiner at the Iowa Office of the State Medical Examiner on October 2, 2006. She is a Clinical Assistant Professor with the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine and an Adjunct Assistant Professor of forensic pathology with Des Moines University.

Dr. Catellier received her B.S. from Indiana University in Occupational Therapy. She received her M.D. from Indiana University School of Medicine. She completed a five-year residency in anatomic and clinical pathology at Methodist Hospital of Indiana and also completed a one-year fellowship in forensic pathology at the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



Michele J. Catellier, M.D.

Following her training, she worked in general pathology for approximately ten years at Winona Memorial Hospital in Indianapolis, where she was Medical Director of the Laboratory. Prior to arrival in Iowa, she worked in the field of forensic pathology in Indianapolis, Indiana. Dr. Catellier is certified by the American Board of Pathology in Forensic, Anatomic and Clinical Pathology.

Dr. Catellier is a member of the Strangulation Task Force and Child Death Review Team.



Jonathan G. Thompson, M.D.

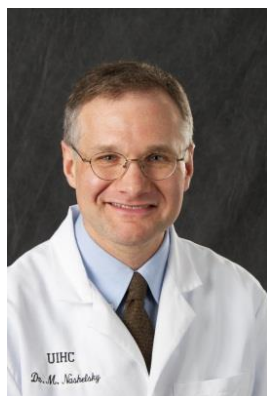
Dr. Jonathan Thompson began his duties as Associate State Medical Examiner at the Iowa Office of the State Medical Examiner on December 12, 2008. He is an Associate Professor of Pathology with the University of Iowa and an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Forensic Pathology with Des Moines University.

Dr. Thompson received his B.S. from the University of Iowa in Exercise Science. He received his M.D. from the University of Iowa School of Medicine. His four-year residency training took place at the University of Minnesota Medical Center and his fellowship in forensic pathology was done at the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office. Dr. Thompson is certified by the American Board of Pathology in Forensic Pathology, and Anatomic and Clinical Pathology.

Prior to Iowa, he was Assistant Medical Examiner with the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Dr. Thompson coordinates medical students on rotation at the IOSME.

ASSISTANT STATE MEDICAL EXAMINERS AT UNIVERSITY OF IOWA



Marcus B. Nashelsky, M.D.

Dr. Marcus Nashelsky has served as Assistant State Medical Examiner providing autopsies at the University of Iowa in Iowa City since 2009, and as Johnson County Deputy Medical Examiner since 2011. He is a Clinical Professor of Pathology at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City.

Dr. Nashelsky received his B.A. from the University of Wyoming and his M.D. from the University of Nebraska-College of Medicine. He completed a five-year residency at the University of Missouri-Columbia Hospitals and Clinics, followed by a one-year fellowship in forensic pathology that took place at the University of New Mexico School of Medicine. Dr. Nashelsky is certified by the American Board of Pathology in Forensic Pathology, and Anatomic and Clinical Pathology.

Dr. Dennis Firchau has served as Assistant State Medical Examiner since 2010 and as Johnson County Deputy Medical Examiner since 2010. He is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Pathology at the University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics.

Dr. Firchau received his B.S. from Michigan State University. He earned his M.D. at Wayne State University of Medicine and completed his residency in pathology at the Medical College of Wisconsin. His fellowship in forensic pathology was completed at the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office, and an additional fellowship in cardiovascular pathology took place at Mayo Clinic. Dr. Firchau is certified by the American Board of Pathology in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology, and Forensic Pathology.



Dennis J. Firchau, M.D.

PREVIOUS IOSME FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST STAFF

Dr. Jerri McLemore served as Associate State Medical Examiner from 2003 to 2010.

Dr. McLemore received her B.A. from the University of Kansas and graduated with Honors in Human Biology and with Highest Distinction. She received her M.D. from the Kansas University School of Medicine. Her five-year residency training took place at the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico as did her fellowship in forensic pathology. She was an instructor in surgical pathology and cytopathology at the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center before beginning her fellowship in forensic pathology. Dr. McLemore is certified by the American Board of Pathology in Forensic Pathology, and Anatomic and Clinical Pathology.

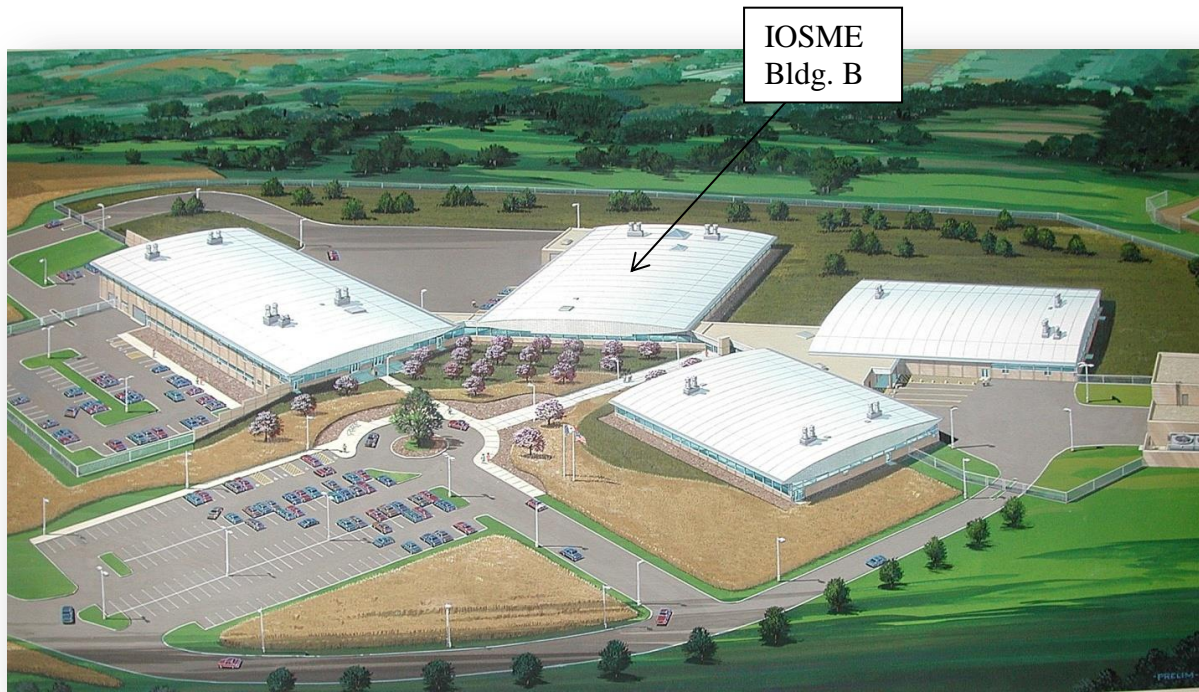


Jerri L. McLemore, M.D.

While at the IOSME, Dr. McLemore was a member of the Child Death Review Team and coordinated the Des Moines University medical student rotations.

Dr. McLemore is currently an Assistant Professor at Wake Forest School of Medicine, Department of Pathology.

A NEW FACILITY



Artist's Rendition of the New Four-Laboratory Complex

A **Groundbreaking Ceremony** for the new facility took place on July 29, 2002, with more than 300 people in attendance. Several speakers were there to celebrate, including Governor Thomas Vilsack, who said the project is “an appropriate investment.”



Governor Thomas Vilsack
(Currently U.S. Secretary of Agriculture)



Dr. Julia Goodin
addresses the
crowd at the
Groundbreaking
Ceremony.



Drs. Francis Garrity, Julia Goodin, Jerri McLemore, Marcus Nashelsky, and Dennis Klein on a visit to the site during construction of the facility.



The new facility was completed in 2005.

The 175,956 square foot facility houses both the IOSME and morgue, along with the Department of Criminal Investigation, Agricultural Lab, and Hygienic Lab.

The IOSME 24,000 square feet of space. The autopsy room has four stations and natural lighting. The main body cooler holds up to 24 bodies with room for 6 more in the special body cooler.

Remote electrical outlets are available for refrigerated trucks as a disaster contingency. In a power outage, the laboratory runs on a backup generator.

A drive-through garage accommodates receiving and releasing bodies. The IOSME is staffed 24 hours per day, 365 days per year, accepting phone calls, and receiving and releasing bodies 24/7.

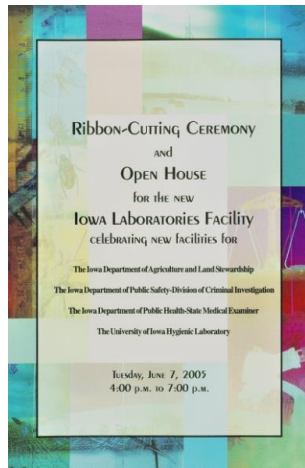


The facility consists of four buildings connected by walkways.



The main autopsy room during construction and after completion.

The Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony took place on June 7, 2005.



Each Laboratory represented in the new facility had a framed plaque for the ceremony.



Dr. Julia Goodin, Director of Public Health Dr. Mary Mincer-Hansen, and Governor Vilsack cut the ribbon on the IOSME plaque.

INVOLVEMENT AND EDUCATION

Interagency Council

The Interagency Coordinating Council was created by the Iowa Legislature in 1999 with the purpose to advise the State Medical Examiner concerning the assurance of effective coordination of the functions and operations of the Office of the State Medical Examiner with the needs and interests of the Departments of Public Safety and Public Health (Iowa Code 691.6B). Members of the Interagency Coordinating Council include the State Medical Examiner; the Commissioner of Public Safety, the Director of Public Health, and the governor, or a representative designated by the member. The Interagency Coordinating Council meets biannually.

Advisory Council

The State Medical Examiner Advisory Council was established in 1999 via Iowa Code 691.6C. This Council was established to “advise and consult with the State Medical Examiner on a range of issues affecting the organization and functions of the office of the State Medical Examiner and the effectiveness of the medical examiner system in the state.” The Advisory Council meets biannually and is currently holding meetings by ICN with origination at the Iowa Laboratory Facility. Membership is determined by Dr. Julia Goodin, State Medical Examiner, in consultation the Director of the Iowa Department of Public Health.

Current membership includes the State Medical Examiner, Deputy State Medical Examiner, and representatives from the University of Iowa—Department of Pathology, Attorney General’s Office, Iowa Association of Pathologists, Iowa County Attorney’s Association, Iowa Funeral Director’s Association, Iowa Association of County Medical Examiners, Iowa Medical Society, Iowa Department of Public Health, Iowa Public Defender’s Office, Iowa Department of Public Safety, and Iowa Emergency Medical Services Association

Child Death Review Team

The State of Iowa Child Death Review Team was established in 1995 by Statute 641-90.1. Functions of the Team were originally coordinated by personnel within the Bureau of Family Health in the Iowa Department of Public Health. In the spring of 2009, the Iowa Office of the State Medical Examiner (IOSME) was assigned the coordination of this multi-disciplinary team. The purpose of the Iowa Child Death Review Team is to aid in the reduction of preventable deaths of children under the age of 18 years through the identification of unsafe consumer products; identification of unsafe environments; identification of factors that play a role in accidents, homicides, and suicides, which may be eliminated or counteracted; and promotion of communication, discussion, cooperation and exchange of ideas and information among agencies investigating child deaths.

Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE)

The Iowa Office of the State Medical Examiner is considered a principle investigator for the Iowa Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program, which collects basic information on all occupational fatalities in the state of Iowa. This program is comprised of individuals who meet monthly from the Iowa Department of Public Health, the Iowa Office of the State Medical Examiner and the University of Iowa. The Program collects in-depth information on select fatal injuries, occasionally conducting detailed on-site investigations. The mission of the Program is to alert employers, employees,

and those who are self-employed, such as farmers, by making recommendations and suggestions to help prevent similar fatalities. The National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health's state-based FACE program began in 1989. Currently, eight other state health or labor departments have cooperative agreements with NIOSH for conducting surveillance, targeted investigations, and prevention activities at the state level.

IMORT

The Iowa Mortuary Operations Response Team (IMORT) is a formal public health response team whose mission is to respond to mass fatality events within the State of Iowa and work under the direction of the state medical examiner. IMORT works closely with law enforcement agencies to help identify, collect and preserve evidence that will aid in determining the cause and manner of death; assist with scene documentation; assist with recovery and processing of remains; and provide family assistance. Each member of the team is a volunteer. A majority of the team is comprised of county medical examiner personnel and funeral service professionals.

Iowa Office of the State Medical Examiner's Commitment to Education

In addition to providing high quality death investigation for law enforcement and families grieving the loss of a loved one, the staff at the Iowa Office of the State Medical Examiner is dedicated to educating future physicians and physician's assistants through our affiliation with Des Moines University Osteopathic School of Medicine and the University of Iowa medical school. We have designed two forensic pathology programs for students at Des Moines University, a 3rd and 4th year elective rotation for medical students, and an elective rotation for physician's assistants. The medical student rotation has been very popular, and the students' evaluations have been enthusiastic. The IOSME is also a part of the University of Iowa medical school's community-based primary care clerkship, where the medical students learn about the office's role in the public health system. Staff at the Iowa Office of the State Medical Examiner considers education of health care professionals, law enforcement officials, legal representatives, and the general public an integral part of their duties.

County Medical Examiner Investigators Training

The IOSME has received Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants since 2004. The funds were applied toward sending Iowa county medical examiner personnel to the medicolegal death investigator training course in St. Louis, Missouri, sending IOSME personnel to continuing education conferences/seminars and various equipment items such as digital cameras for scene investigations, autopsy/morgue equipment and a computerized case management system.

As of August 2012, Iowa has 32 Registered Diplomates and 5 Board Certified Medicolegal Death Investigators.

ME 101 on the Road

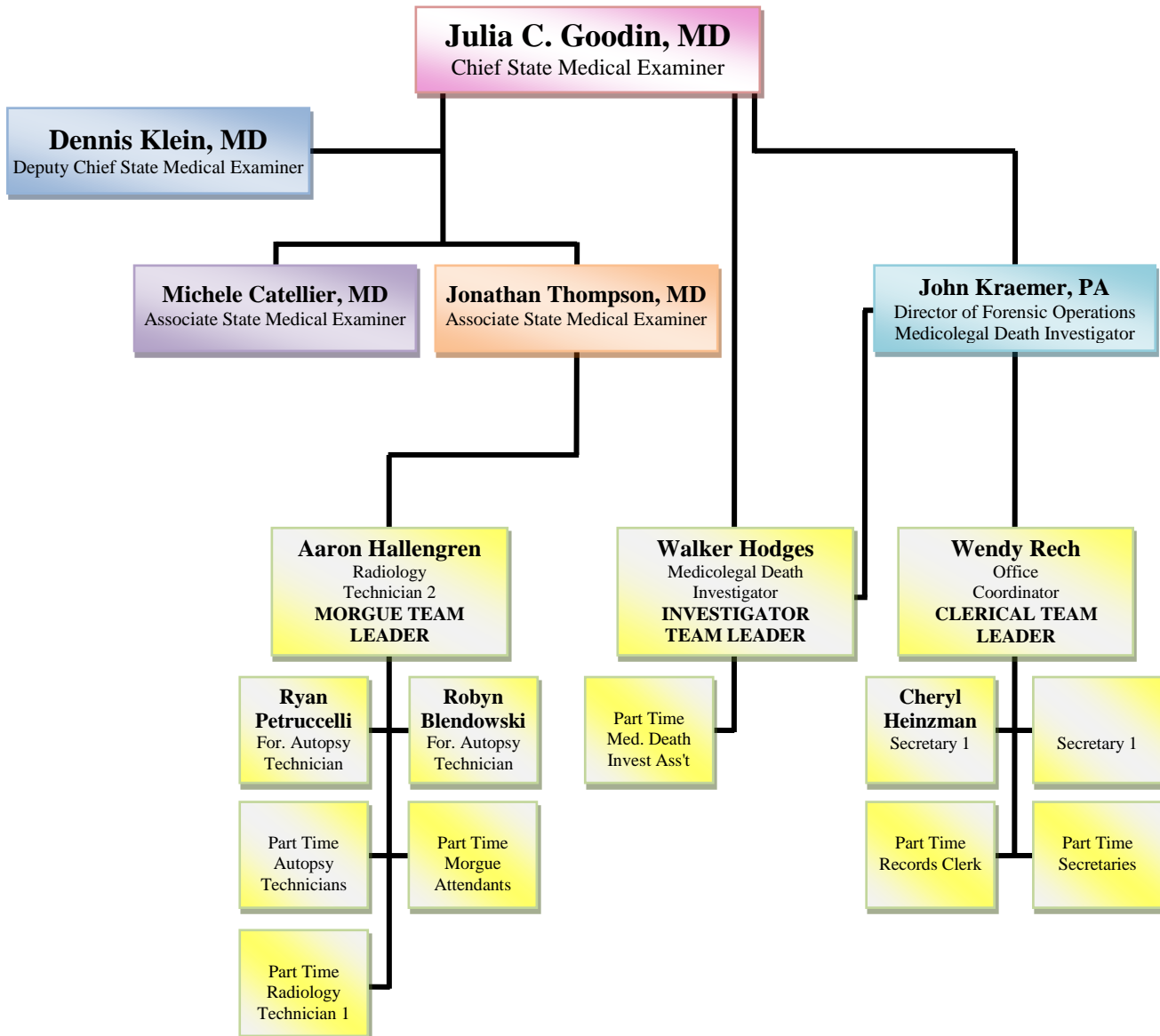
ME 101 began in June 2007 and is a popular hands-on learning session offered prior to the Iowa County Medical Examiner Conference each November. The course is offered periodically during the year at different counties throughout Iowa. Traveling to the counties to provide instruction offers many advantages including wider participation and convenience for individuals involved with death investigation at the local level.

What is covered in ME 101 On the Road?

- Review accurate completion of the ME-1 Form.
- Describe how to conduct a thorough medicolegal death scene investigation.
- Review the roles of the ME and the ME Investigator at a death scene.
- Discuss the scientific basis of human identification.
- Identify the necessary tasks at infant death scene investigations.
- Describe the types of deaths investigated in Iowa.
- Discuss the Medicolegal system and administrative rules pertinent to death investigation in the state of Iowa.
- Determine which cases come under medical examiner jurisdiction and which ones need to have an autopsy.
- Discover strategies for establishing cost effective contracts for body transportation and reimbursement for medicolegal death investigation.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

The IOSME currently has eleven full-time staff members: Four forensic pathologists, one director of forensic services, one medicolegal death investigator, two secretaries, one radiologic technician, and two Autopsy Technicians. In addition, the office employs sixteen part-time morgue attendants who staff the facility overnight, twelve part-time autopsy technicians, one part-time radiologic technician, and three part-time secretaries. Full-time and part-time employees are cross-trained in other areas in order to maintain efficiency when the workload increases.



OFFICE INFORMATION

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Iowa Office of the State Medical Examiner
2250 South Ankeny Blvd.
Ankeny, IA 50023-9093

Phone: (515) 725-1400

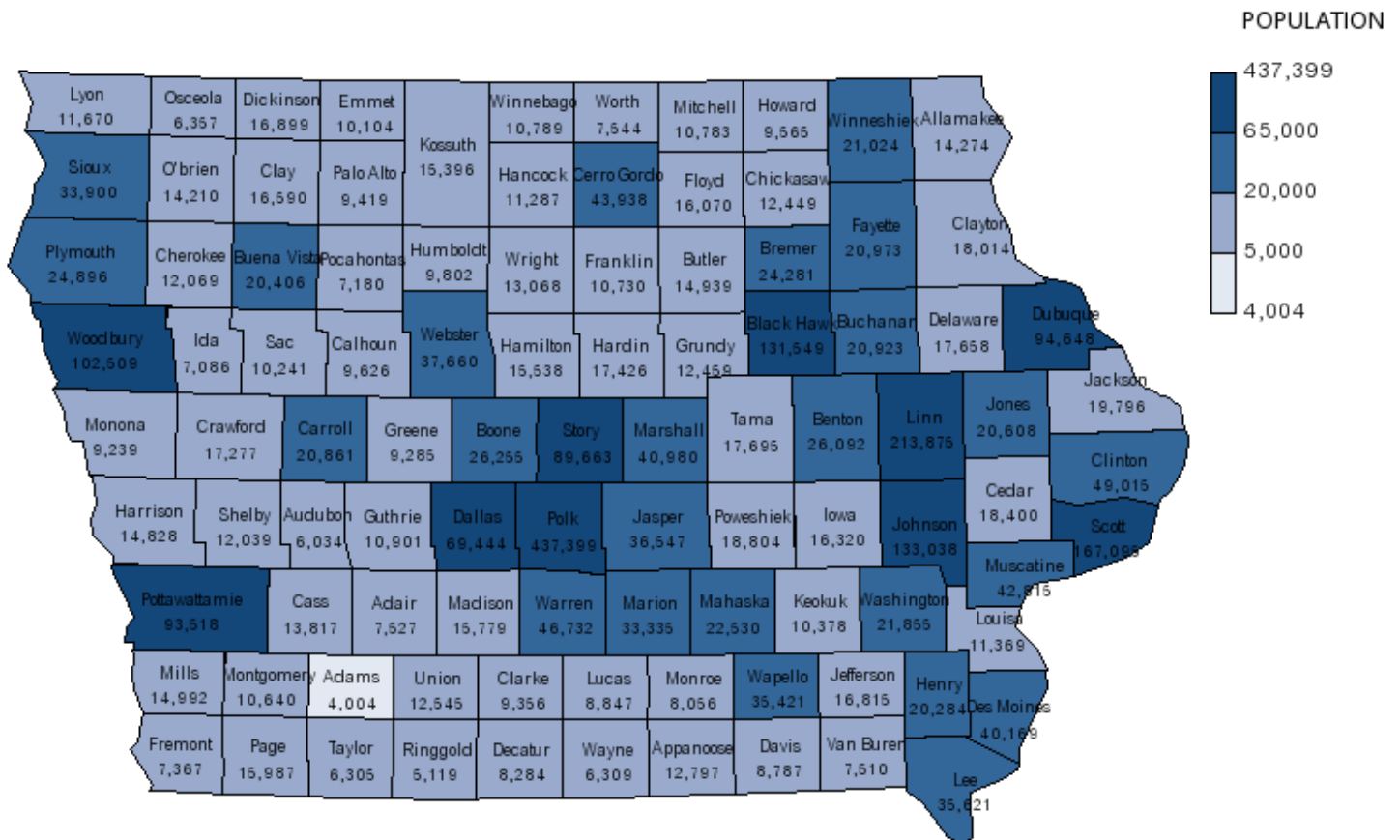
Fax: (515) 725-1414

Website: www.iosme.iowa.gov

Fully accredited by NAME since 2008

Population served: 3,074,186 (2012 census).

*Source: United States Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts



2011 Annual Budget: \$2,722,530 (including revenue) - \$907,235 (General Fund)

2012 Annual Budget: \$3,080,034 (including revenue) - \$852,801 (General Fund)

2013 Annual Budget: \$3,051,208 (including revenue) - \$822,084 (General Fund)

HISTORICAL CASE INFORMATION

| Year | Autopsied by IOSME | | | | | | TOTAL |
|------|--------------------|---------|----------|---------|--------------|-----|-------|
| | Homicide | Suicide | Accident | Natural | Undetermined | N/A | |
| 2000 | 28 | 27 | 79 | 41 | 8 | 6 | 189 |
| 2001 | 33 | 56 | 120 | 97 | 6 | 2 | 314 |
| 2002 | 34 | 43 | 120 | 123 | 9 | 3 | 332 |
| 2003 | 30 | 64 | 189 | 110 | 14 | 2 | 409 |
| 2004 | 21 | 71 | 153 | 112 | 18 | 1 | 376 |
| 2005 | 26 | 86 | 249 | 151 | 26 | 2 | 540 |
| 2006 | 39 | 108 | 228 | 146 | 41 | 4 | 566 |
| 2007 | 37 | 108 | 270 | 150 | 47 | 6 | 618 |
| 2008 | 48 | 163 | 311 | 178 | 56 | 1 | 757 |
| 2009 | 34 | 151 | 283 | 160 | 42 | 0 | 670 |
| 2010 | 41 | 143 | 311 | 145 | 62 | 1 | 703 |
| 2011 | 38 | 162 | 290 | 165 | 55 | 11 | 721 |
| 2012 | 46 | 142 | 301 | 171 | 57 | 5 | 722 |

| Year | State-Wide | |
|------|------------|-------------|
| | # ME Cases | # Autopsied |
| 2000 | 3418 | 972 |
| 2001 | 3030 | 1068 |
| 2002 | 3341 | 1238 |
| 2003 | 3489 | 1309 |
| 2004 | 3265 | 1378 |
| 2005 | 3386 | 1472 |
| 2006 | 3792 | 1505 |
| 2007 | 4230 | 1442 |
| 2008 | 5040 | 1538 |
| 2009 | 4608 | 1391 |
| 2010 | 4639 | 1480 |
| 2011 | 5044 | 1546 |
| 2012 | 5075 | 1501 |



"SLIDES"

Designed exclusively for the Iowa Laboratory Facility
By Seattle public artist Norie Sato

Framing the main entryway of the Iowa Laboratory Facility, glass slides, reminiscent of the glass slides used with specimens for microscopes, are set in metal grooves enabling them to be moved horizontally across a track. As the panels are moved, the southern sun shines through the panels, creating an ever-changing array of color and light.

The three separate displays contain forty painted and sandblasted glass panels. Each section includes five layers. A base layer is stationary and includes an image of an Iowa landscape. The four sliding glass panels in front of each landscape have images based on the work of each of the laboratories housed in the facility.

The glass was produced at Franz Mayer Studios in Munich, Germany, as a collaborative effort between the glass craftspeople at the studio and the artist, who hand painted many of the panels.



THE IOSME TODAY

The IOSME is proud to have a state medical examiner system. Through combined efforts of the centralized state office and the local county offices throughout the state, Iowa has a strong, modern medicolegal death investigation system.

The county medical examiners determine whether an autopsy is necessary, and they determine cause of death and manner of death in cases that are not sent for autopsy.

The IOSME provides many services, including guidelines, assistance, direction, and training to county medical examiner personnel and law enforcement officials. The IOSME also provides autopsy service to the counties, testimony for court, and education for the medical school and many other groups throughout the state.

County medical examiner responsibilities are outlined in §§ 331.801-805 of the Code of Iowa while the duties of the State and Deputy State Medical Examiner can be found under §§ 691.5-6C. With the goal of having a high level of standard of practice through the state, the IOSME expounded on these established rules for death investigation via the 641 Iowa Administrative Code Chapter, 126 State Medical Examiner and Chapter 127. These codes and rules can be viewed and printed from the links found on the Medical Examiner main page (www.iosme.iowa.gov).

The physicians in the county are paid very little, if at all, for their services to the county. Some of them even volunteer, along with running a practice. Many county medical examiners are family physicians or ER physicians, and it is difficult for them to get away from their practice to go to a death scene. To help alleviate this problem, the IOSME has promoted the use of Medicolegal Death Investigators. The IOSME provides training for the investigators and encourages them to attend the St. Louis Medicolegal Death Investigator course. Some of the funds that the IOSME receives from the Paul Coverdell Grant are used to send county medical examiner investigators to the St. Louis death investigators course.

The IOSME was successfully accredited by NAME in 2008. Iowa is one of only eight states where the state medical examiner's office and the state crime laboratory are both accredited by their respective bodies.

